

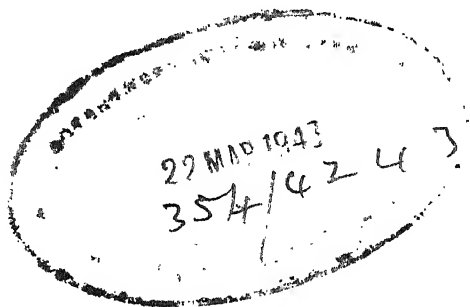
~~V. E-1~~

History of Ancient India

E-1/

By

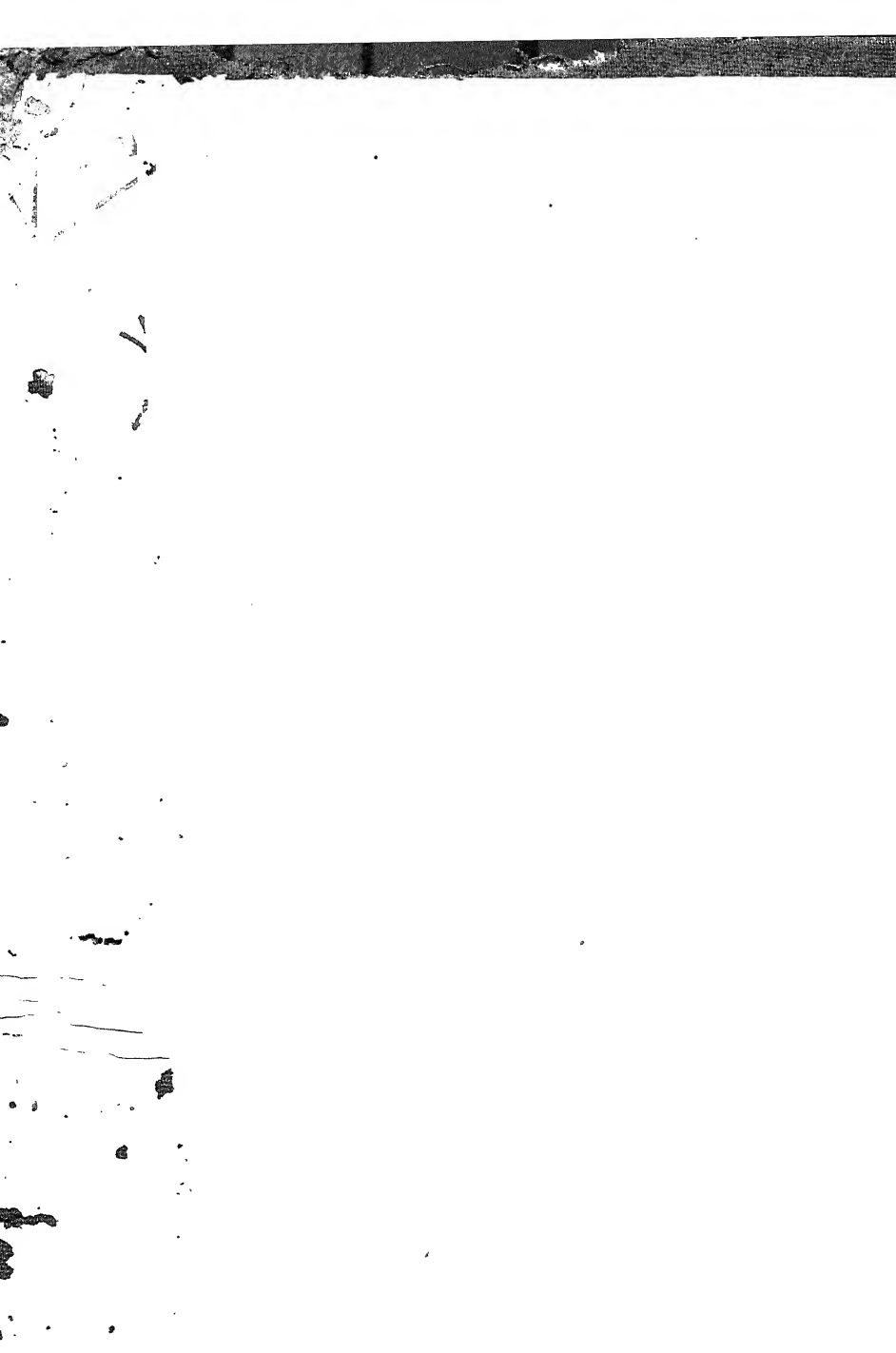
RAMA SHANKAR TRIPATHI, M.A., Ph.D. (LOND.)
Professor of Ancient Indian History and Culture, Benares Hindu University; formerly U. P. Government Scholar, School of Oriental Studies, London; Author of 'History of Kanauj to the Moslem Conquest.'



*All rights, including the rights of translation
and abridgement, are reserved by the A*

TO
THE SWEET
AND
EVER-CHERISHED MEMORY
OF
MY DEARLY BELOVED WIFE
HEMAVATĪ DEVĪ

*“A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright,
With something of angelic light.”*



PREFACE

The object of this volume is to provide within a moderate compass a compendious account of the history, institutions, and culture of ancient India from the dim ages of antiquity to the establishment of Moslem rule. It has not been planned to meet the needs of any particular class of readers. Its primary purpose is to serve alike students, scholars, and all others, interested in the study of ancient Indian history, as a book of ready use and reference. How far I have succeeded in striking a happy balance in my narrative to suit the requirements and tastes of each one of these groups that approach history from widely divergent angles, it is for competent critics to judge. But suffice it to say here that in the pages which follow every attempt has been made to avoid presenting a mass of the dry bones of historical fact or over-burdening the account with intricate discussions on knotty problems of history, on the one hand, and giving a mere general and readable survey of India's long and fascinating past, on the other. I have endeavoured to tap and utilise properly the available sources of information, literary, epigraphic, and numismatic, and also to embody and set forth in a consistent manner the results of up-to-date researches on different topics and epochs. All the materials have been patiently sifted and critically examined with the sole desire to arrive at historical truth.

For he is neither a propagandist of ideas nor a chronicler of the exploits of ambitious dynasts of old. He has, as far as possible, eliminate the subjective element and hold up the mirror of his mind to reflect the facts without the least distortion or colouring. He cannot afford to be dogmatic in his statements on the events in ancient Indian history, where gaps still yawn and the evidence is not only vague, uncertain, and fragmentary, but also at times conflicting or contradictory. The uncertainty being the nature of the data at our disposal, the historicity of some kings is indeed a matter of debate and controversy at this distance in time. Such scepticism, however, appears natural, when we realise that our ancient predecessors as well had a fair share of it. We may aptly recall here the words of the *Purāna*,¹ which run to this effect: "I have given up the history. The existence of these kings will in the future become a matter of debate and doubt as the verities of Rāma and other august kings has become a matter of doubt and speculation. Emperors will be mere legends in the current of time—the Empire will be a thought and think "India is mine." Fie on the Empire of Emperor Rāghava."

The idea of the work originated a few years ago, but, for reasons which need not be detailed, it could not materialise earlier. Even now I have not been able to write a chapter on Greater India, though I have on the general features of our history. I have, however, to add both in the second edition what was left out. I have not also been able to give the book any illustrations owing to the forbidding prices of the printing materials.

them where necessary. I owe special obligation to my esteemed friend, Prof. B. L. Sahni, who very kindly went through the proofs at much personal inconvenience, and ungrudgingly gave me the benefit of his scholarship and experience. To my valued colleague, Dr. A. S. Altekar, I am grateful for going through the MS. and making some useful suggestions. Lastly, my thanks are also due to Mr. Ram Sumer for helping me in the preparation of the Index.

The system of transliteration adopted in the text is the one followed in my earlier work, 'The History of Kanauj.' To illustrate, we may mention: Bāṇa, Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Śaṣigupta, Soma, Candra, Coḷa, Aṅga, Rigveda, etc. But, as a rule, I have not used diacritical marks in the case of modern place-names and other popular forms.

In conclusion, I crave the readers' indulgence for any blemishes and errors of omission and commission, which may still be discovered by the discerning eye, although no pains have been spared to make the account lucid, accurate, concise, and comprehensive. The subject dealt with here is vast and complicated, and while writing I was often reminded of the well-known lines of Kālidāsa:

क्व सूर्यप्रभवो वंशः क्व चाल्पविषया मतिः
तितीर्षुर्दुस्तरं मोहादुडुपेनास्मि सागरम् ॥



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- Ep. Ind.—Epigraphia Indica.
S. I. I.—South Indian Inscriptions.
C. I. I.—Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Volumes
I, II & III.
R. E.—Rock Edict of Aśoka.
M. R. E.—Minor Rock Edict of Aśoka.
P. E.—Pillar Edict of Aśoka.
M. P. E.—Minor Pillar Edict of Aśoka.
Ind. Ant.—Indian Antiquary.
J. R. A. S.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
J. B. O. R. S.—Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research
Society.
Jour. Ind. Hist.—Journal of Indian History.
Jour. U. P. Hist. Soc.—Journal of the U. P. Historical
Society.
J. B. H. U.—Journal of the Benares Hindu University.
Jour. Dept. Lett.—Journal of the Department of Letters.
J. N. S. I.—Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.
J. A. S. B.—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
Mem. As. Soc. Beng.—Memoirs of the Asiatic Society
of Bengal.
Proc. As. Soc. Beng.—Proceedings of the Asiatic Society
of Bengal.
Proc. 1st. Or. Conf.—Proceedings of the first Oriental
Conference.

- Rep. Arch. Surv. West. Ind.—Report
 gical Survey of Western India.
- Arch. Surv. Ind., or A. S. I.—Archæological
 Survey of India.
- A. S. S. I.—Archæological Survey of India
 Report.
- Arch. Surv. Ind. Rep., or A. S. I. Rep.—
 Survey of India Report.
- Mem. Arch. Surv. Ind.—Memoirs of the
 Survey of India.
- Prog. Rep. A. S. W. C.—Progress Report of the
 Archæological Survey of Western India.
- Prog. Rep. Arch. Surv. Ind.—Progress Report of the
 Archæological Survey of India.
- Cam. Hist. Ind., or C. H. I.—Cambridge History of
 India, Vol. I (Rapson).
- Cam. Sh. Hist. Ind.—Cambridge Short History of
 India.
- E. H. I.—Early History of India.
- Ox. Hist. Ind.—Oxford History of India.
- E. H. D.—Early History of the Deccan (H. C. Ray-
 kar).
- Anc. Hist. Dec., or A. H. D.—Ancient History of the
 Deccan (J. Dubreuil).
- Pol. Hist. Anc. Ind.—Political History of Ancient
 India (H. C. Raychaudhuri).
- C. C. G. D.—Catalogue of the Dynasties of the
 Dynasties (John Allan).
- Dy. Hist. North. Ind.—Dynastic History of
 India (H. C. Ray).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

xiii

- Ancient India—M'Crindle, Ancient India as described in
Classical Literature.
- G. B. I.—The Greeks in Bactria and India (W. W. Tarn).
- Hc.—Harṣacarita.
- Hc. C. T.—Harṣacarita (English Translation by Cowell
and Thomas).
- G. O. S.—Gaekwād Oriental Series.
- Sachau—Alberuni's India (English Translation).
- Watters—On Yuan Chwang's Travels.
- Beal—Buddhist Records of the Western World.
- Life—Life of Yuan Chwang (Samuel Beal).
- Stein—English Translation of Kalhaṇa's Rājatarāṅgiṇī.
- Elliot—History of India as told by its own Historians.
- Briggs—History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power
(Tārikh-i-Firishta).

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Dedication	v
Preface	vii
List of Abbreviations	xi

PART I

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Sources

Absence of history—1; Non-historical works—2;
So-called historical literature—2; Foreign writings—4;
Archæological—Inscriptions, coins, monuments—6,
7, 8; Conclusion or main features—9.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-HISTORIC PERIOD

Section A

Palæolithic age—11.

Section B

Neolithic age—12.

Section C.

(i) The advent of metals—13.

(ii) The Dravidians—14.

Section D.

ning and textile—20; Dress—21; disposal of the dead—22; Knowledge of Art—23; Who were the authors—24; Date—25.

CHAPTER III

THE RIGVEDIC AGE

Origin and home of the Aryans—27; Geographical background—28; Tribal divisions and organisation—31; Family life—32; Trade—34; Other features of life—34; Ornaments, Food, Drink, Agriculture—35; Religion—36; Date—38; Indus and Aryans contrasted—39.

CHAPTER IV

LATER VEDIC PERIOD

Wider geographical outlook—40; Tribal groupings—42; Rise of the King—44; Political divisions—44; Social changes—48; Position of Śrauta—49; Occupations—50; Other features—50; Coins, dress, amusements, food—51; Religion and Philosophy—51; Pre-vedic—53.

CHAPTER V

—59; Social Orders—59; Royal Powers—60; Taxes—61; Law—61.

Section B

The *Epics*—62; Origin of Epic Poetry—62; The *Rāmāyaṇa*: Its main story—62; Age of the *Rāmāyaṇa*—63; Is the *Rāmāyaṇa* historical?—64; The *Mahābhārata*: Its age—65; The Story in brief—66; Its historical value—67; Gleanings from the *Epics*—69, (a) The King—69, (b) Administration—70, (c) The Army—71, (d) *Gaṇas*—71, (e) The People—71, (f) Religion—72.

Section C

The *Dharmaśāstras*—73; Society: *Varnas*—73; The Stages of Life—74; Position of Women—75; The State—76; Justice—79; Taxation—80; Occupations and Trade—81.

PART II

CHAPTER VI

THE AGE OF THE BUDDHA

Section A

India just before the rise of Buddhism—82.

Section B

(a) Democratic or Autonomous clans—85, Details about the *Sākya*s, etc.—87.

(b) Monarchical states—89.

I. The *Vatsa* kingdom—89; II. *Avanti*—90;

III. *Kośala*—*Pasenadi*, *Viḍudābha*—91, 92;

IV. *Magadha*—*Bimbisāra*, *Ajātaśatru*—93, 94.

—102; Relation between Jainism

Section D

Economic condition—104; Villages
Cities—105; Arts and crafts—106
and Trade-routes—107; Money—

II—SUCCESSORS OF AJ

Udāyin, Darśaka and others—
Origin—109; Mahāpadma—110;
Date—112; *Appendix*—Genealog
decessors of the Nandas—113.

CHAPTER VII

CONTACT WITH THE OUT

Section A

The Persian conquest—Cyrus, D
116; Results of contact—116.

Section B

The invasion of Alexander—117;
advance eastward—117; The A
Nysa—119; Defeat of the Assak
in North-Western India—121; T
122; Poros—123; Alexander an
other—123; 'Causes of Poros' def
ment of Poros—126; Foundation
Defeat of the Glausai and yo
Capture of Pimprama—128; Sa
The Greek army refuses to adv

tion of the lower Indus valley—139; Mousikanos—139; Brahmanic opposition—139; Characteristics of the Mousikanos kingdom—140; Pattala—141; Home-ward route—141; Conclusion—141; Alexander's arrangements—142; Results of the Invasion—143; Society and Religion—143; Economic condition—144.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAURYA EMPIRE

Section A—Candragupta Maurya

Ancestry—146; Conditions favourable to his rise—146; Destruction of Nanda Power and date of accession—148; Conquests—149; War with Seleukos—149; Megasthenes and Kauṭilya—150; Administration—151, (a) Military organisation—151, (b) Imperial government—152, (c) Provincial administration—153, (d) Municipal administration—154; Pāṭaliputra—155; Rural government—156; Penal code—156; Irrigation—156; Sources of income and expenditure—157; Megasthenes on Indian castes—157; The Imperial palace—158; His personal life—158; Candragupta's end—159.

Section B—Bindusāra

Candragupta's successor—160; Did he conquer the South?—160; Revolt—160; Foreign contact—161.

CHAPTER IX

Section A—Aśoka

Accession—162; Disputed succession—162; The Kalinga war—163; His personal religion—164; Aśoka's toleration—165; His "Dhamma"—165;

Edicts—176; Estimate of Aśoka—

Section B

Aśoka's successors—178; Causes of the Mauryas—180.

Appendix I—Translation of R. E. Edict—181.

Appendix II—Genealogical table—182.

CHAPTER X

I—THE BRAHMAN RULERS

Section A—The Śuṅgas

Subversion of the Maurya dynasty—the Śuṅgas?—183; Events—184, Vidarbha—184, (b) The Yavana in the The Aśvamedha sacrifice—186; Ext—186; Puṣyamitra's persecutions—successors—187; Śuṅga religion, at—188.

Section B—The Kaṅvas

Date and circumstances of their rise—family—189; *Appendix I*—Genealogy—Śuṅgas—190; *Appendix II*—Genealogy—Kaṅvas—190.

Section C—The Sātavāhanas

Date of their rise—191; Which—Andhra or Sātavāhana—192; Origin—hanas—193; Rulers of the dynasty—Sātakarṇi—194; Vaśiṣṭhiputra Śr

II—KING KHĀRAVELA OF KALINGA

Chronological position—199; Events—200.

CHAPTER XI

I—THE EPOCH OF FOREIGN INVADERS

Section A—The Indo-Greeks

Revolt of Parthia and Bactria—202; Arsakes, Diodotus I, Diodotus II, Euthydemos—202, 203; Invasion of Antiochos III—203; Conquests of the Bactrian Greeks—204; Demetrios—204; Eukratides revolts—204; Division—205; House of Euthydemos—205; Menander—205; House of Eukratides—207; Heliodorus—207; Antialkidas—207; Hermæus—208; Results of Greek contact—208.

Section B—The Sakas and the Pahlavas

Saka migrations—211.

I. Maues—212, His successors—213; II. Satraps of the North-West—214; III. Satraps of Mathurā—214; IV. Kṣaharātas of Mahārāṣṭra—215, Nahapāna—216; V. The Satraps of Ujjain—217, Caṣṭana—217, Rudradāman—217, Rudradāman's successors—218.

Section C—The Kushans

Yueh-chi movements—221; The five principalities—222; Kujūla Kadphises—222; Vīma Kadphises—222; Kaniṣka—223; His date—223; Conquests—225; Hostages—225; Extent of Kaniṣka's dominions—226; His capital—227; His Satraps—227; Kaniṣka's public works—227; His religion—228; The Buddhist Coun-

II—THE "DARK" INTER

The Bhāraśiva Nāgas—234.

PART III

CHAPTER XII

I—THE IMPERIAL GUPT

Origin of the Guptas—237; Beginning of power—237; Candragupta I—238; 240; Allahabad Pillar Inscription—241; Degrees of conquests—245; foreign powers—245; The Aśvamedh His personal accomplishments—247; 248; Date of his death—248; Candragupta II Vikramāditya—249; Position of the Empire—250; The Vā 250; The Saka campaign—250; Results—251; Who was king Candragupta?—252; State of the Empire—253; Pāṭaliputra—253; State of the Empire—255; Administrative condition—255; Family—257; Epigraphic evidence—257; Family—257; Kumāragupta I Mahendrāditya—259; accession—259; His power—259; The sacrifice—259; The Puṣyamitra War—260; Skandagupta Kramāditya—260; troubles—261; Hūṇa invasions—261; 262; lake—262; Religion—262; Titles, Dā Later Emperors—263; Puragupta—263; 264; Kumāragupta II—264; Buddhagupta—265.

Appendix—The Imperial Gupta Line—

dhism, Jainism, Religious benefactions—268, 269, 270; Revival of Sanskrit—271; Development of literature—271; Education—273; Gupta currency—274; Architecture—274; Sculpture—275; Painting—276; Metal-working—276; Causes of activity—276.

Section B—The Vākātakas

Their importance—277; Origin and derivation of the name—277; Prominent rulers of the dynasty—278.

Section C—The Hūṇas and Yaśodharman

Hūṇa movements—279; Attack on the Guptas—279; Toramāṇa—280; Mihirakula—281; Yaśodharman—281; Death of Mihirakula—283.

Section D—The Kings of Valabhī

Foundation of the dynasty—283, Origin—283; Growth of power—284; Dhruvasena II—284; Dharasena IV—285; Later history—285.

Section E—The Later Guptas of Magadha

Kriṣṇagupta and his successors—286, 287.

Section F—The Maukharis

Antiquity—288; Origin—288; Their branches—288; The great Maukharis of Kanauj—289.

CHAPTER XIV

HARṢAVARDHANA OF THĀNEŚVAR AND
KANAUJ

Importance emphasised by ample materials—291; Ancestors of Harṣa—291; Early position—292; Campaigns of Harṣa—295; Chronology of Harṣa's cam-

administration—304; Glories of assembly at Kanauj—306; Quinquennial Prayāga—308; Yuan Chwang, Harṣa's religion—309; General religion—310; Harṣa's patronage of learning—311; Harṣa's death and its author—313; Harṣa's death and its

CHAPTER XV

POST-HARṢA AND PRE-MOSLEM INDIA

(FROM c. 647 A.D. TO c. 1000 A.D.)

Section A—The kingdom of Kanauj

- I. Yaśovarman—316.
- II. The Āyudhas—Vajrāyudha, yudha—317.
- III. The Imperial Pratīhāras—
Origin—318; Original territories of power—319; Nāga (c. 647-650 A.D.)—320; Mihira Bhoja (c. 650-657 A.D.)—321; Mahendrapāla I (c. 657-685 A.D.)—322; Mahendrapāla II (c. 685-700 A.D.)—323; Mahendrapāla III (c. 700-715 A.D.)—324; Mahendrapāla IV (c. 715-725 A.D.)—325; Mahendrapāla V (c. 725-735 A.D.)—326.
- IV. *The Gāhādavālas*—
Chaotic conditions—326; Oṅka-deva—327; Govindacandra—328; Jayacandra—329; Hariścandra—329; Sriharṣa—330.

Section B—Nepal

Section D—Sind

Area—336; Meagre information—336; The Rai dynasty—337; Line of Chach—337; Advent of the Moslems—337; Results of contact—338; Later history—338.

Section E—The Sāhīs of Kabul and the Punjab

Turkī Sāhīs—339; Hindu Sāhīs—340; Sāmantadeva—341; Jayapāla—341; Ānandapāla—342.

Section F—Kashmir

Geographical application of the name—342; Early history—343; The Karkoṭaka dynasty—344; Durlabhavardhana—344; Lalitāditya Mukṭāpīḍa—344; Jayāpīḍa Vinayāditya—345; The Utpala dynasty—345; Avantivarman—345; Saṅkaravarman—346; Later Utpalas—347; The Line of Parvagupta—348; The Loharas—348.

CHAPTER XVI

MEDIEVAL HINDU DYNASTIES OF NORTHERN
INDIA—(continued)

Section A—Assam

Extent of Kāmarūpa—350; Legendary rulers—350; Early epigraphic notices—351; Bhāskaravarman—351; Later history—352; Pāla aggressions—352; Foreign incursions—353; Religion—353.

Section B—The Pālas

Early history of Bengal—354; Who were the Pālas?—355; Gopāla—355; Dharmapāla—355; Devapāla—355; Nityānanda—355; Mahāpāla—355; Nityānanda—355.

Lakṣamaṇasena—365.

Section D—Kaliṅga and Odra

Extent—367; Scanty information—367; Their achievements of the Keśarīs—367; The Gaṅgas—368.

Section E—The Kalacuris of Tripurī

Their lineage—369; Kōkalla I—369; Gāṅga—370; Lakṣmī-Karṇa—371; Karṇa's successors—371.

Section F—The Candellas of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand)

Their origin—373; Beginnings of their power—373; Dhāṅga—374; Gaṇḍa—375; Kīrtivarman—376; Madanavarman—376; Paramārdi—377; Candellas and lakes—377.

Section G—The Paramāras of Malwa

Who were the Paramāras?—378; Early stage of their power—379; Vākpati-Muñja—380; Sindhu—381; Bhoja—381; Later history of the family—381.

Section H—The Cālukya dynasty of Anhilwāḍa

Founder's ancestry and career—385; Bhīm—386; Karṇa—387; Jayasīṃha Siddharāja—388; Kīrtivarman—389; Later History of Gujarat—390.

PART IV

CHAPTER XVII

THE DYNASTIES OF DAKṢIṆĀPATHA

Unhappy end—400; Pulakeśin II's successors—400;
Patronage of religion and art—402.

Section B—The Rāṣṭrakūṭas of Mānyakheṭa

Extraction of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas—403; Their original home—403; Rise of the dynasty—404; Growth of Rāṣṭrakūṭa Imperialism—406, (a) Govinda II—406, (b) Dhruva Nirupama—406, (c) Govinda III Jagat-tuṅga—407; Amoghavarṣa I—408; Amoghavarṣa's successors—411; Kriṣṇa II—411; Indra III—412; Amoghavarṣa II—412; Govinda IV—413; Amoghavarṣa III—413; Kriṣṇa III—413; Downfall of the dynasty—415; The Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Arabs—415; Religious conditions—416.

Section C—The Western Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa

Tailapa's descent—417; His career—418 C. 997 A.D. to 1042 A.D.—419; Someśvara I Āhavamalla (A.D. 1042-1068 A.D.)—420; Someśvara II Bhuvanaikamalla—422; Vikramāditya VI Tribhuvanamalla—423; Later rulers—424; The Kālacuri interregnum—425.

Section D—The Yādava rulers of Devagiri

Origin and growth of power—426; Siṅghaṇa—427; Later Yādava kings—428; Moslem invasions—428.

Section E—The Kākatīyas of Warangal

Origin—429; Brief account—430.

Section F—The Silāhāras

Origin—431; History—431.

Section G—The Kadambas

Name and ancestry—435; Historical

CHAPTER XVIII

THE STATES OF THE SOUTHERN

Section A

Survey of early history—438.

Section B—The Pallavas of Kāñcī.

Who were the Pallavas?—441; Beginning of their power—443; Pallavas of the South—444; The Great Pallavas—445; Mahendravarman I—446; Narasimha Varman Paramēśvaravarman I—449; Narasimha Varman II—450; Nandivarman and his successful administration—452; Literature—453; Art—455.

Section C—The Coḷas.

Derivation—456; Their territory—457; Early history—457; The Impugnation of Vijayālaya—459; Āditya I—459; Period of obscurity—461; Rājendra I (c. 1042-46 A.D.)—461; Rājendra I Gaṅgavardhana (c. 1046-63 A.D.)—463; Rājādhirāja I (c. 1063-70 A.D.)—467; Rājendra (deva) II (c. 1052-63 A.D.)—467; Rājendra (c. 1063-70 A.D.)—467; Rājendra (c. 1070-76 A.D.)—468; Kulottuṅga I (c. 1076-1102 A.D.)—471; Successors of Kulottuṅga I—471; the Coḷas—473; The king and his subjects—473; Territorial Divisions—473; Assen- sion of the king—476; Sur es of Rever-

CONTENTS

xxix

Section D—The Pāṇdyas of Maḍurā—480.

Origin—480; Pāṇḍya land—481; Early glimpses—481;
Obscure centuries—482; Period of growth—483; Coḷa
suzerainty—485; Renewed prosperity—486.

Appendix—Yuan Chwang's testimony—489.

Section E—The Ceras—489.

Their origin and territory—489; History—490.

General Bibliography—493

Index of names—513



PART I

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Sources

Absence of History

Ancient Indian literature, varied and rich in many respects, is singularly deficient in history. There is no work in all the literary treasures of the Brahmans, Buddhists and Jains comparable to the *Book of Kings* or the *Annals* of Livy or the *Histories* of Herodotus. This is not because India's past is barren of deeds worthy of remembrance. On the other hand, the ages were filled with heroic achievements, great upheavals and dynastic vicissitudes, but, strangely enough, these events did not find any systematic record with due regard to chronology. Whether this curious neglect of an important branch of literary activity was due to a lack of proper historical sense, or to the indifference of the religious orders, that controlled and developed the literatures, towards the fleeting mundane affairs of life, there is no gainsaying that the historian of ancient India suffers greatly from the initial difficulty of the want of genuine works of historiography.¹

2 LITERARY SOURCES—NON-HISTORICAL

The sources of early Indian history may be divided into two classes, historical and non-historical, which are either indigenous or foreign. We must first take up the former.

Literary sources

Non-Historical Works

The earliest literature of India is of a religious kind. The patience and industry of scholars have, however, succeeded in extracting from it some useful bits of history. For instance, the *Rigveda*—and especially the *Rigveda*—have furnished a mass of historical information relating to the Aryans in India, their internal divisions, the "Dasyus" and other cognate peoples, the *Brāhmanas* (e.g., *Aitareya*, *Śaṅkhayana*), the *Upaniṣads*, like the *Bṛihadāraṇyaka*, as also the Buddhist *Piṭakas*, the *Jaina* and Jain canonical works (e.g., *Kaṭha*, *Upaniṣads*, *Yoga Sūtra*) incidentally embodying historical facts that may be utilised with profit. It has further demonstrated how such works as the *Gārgī-Sambhitā*, an astronomical treatise, the dramas of Kālidāsa and Bhāsa, the illustrations of grammatical rules in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, or by Patañjali in the *Maṅgalikā*, afford us welcome light on our past. But valuable and trustworthy as these sources are, they are far too meagre to supply the needs of a full history.

So-called Historical Literature

Epics—the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*—represent the first notable attempts of the ancient Hindus in this direction. No doubt, they give interesting pictures of the then religious and social conditions, but as chronicles of political events they seem lamentably full of tale-telling and chronological aberrations. Next come the *Purāṇas*, eighteen in number, which are said to have been recited by the *Sūta* Lomahaṛṣaṇa or his son (*Sauti*) Ugraśravas. Normally, they should deal with five set subjects, viz., (a) *Sarga* (primary creation), (b) *Pratisarga* (re-creation after periodical dissolution of the universe), (c) *Vamśa* (genealogies of gods and *Riṣis*), (d) *Mamvantara* (groups of *mahāyuga* “great ages” in a *Kalpa* or æon, in each of which the first father of mankind was Manu), (e) *Vamśānucarita* (histories of old dynasties of kings). Of these, the last topic alone is important for the purpose of history, but it is found in the *Matsya*, *Vāyu*, *Viṣṇu*, *Brahmāṇḍa*, *Bhāgavata* and *Bhaviṣya* only out of the extant *Purāṇas*. Thus, most of these “collections of ‘old world’ legends” have got no historical value whatsoever. Even the rest contain much that is manifestly mythological and altogether confused from the chronological point of view.¹ They sometimes treat contemporaneous dynasties or rulers as successive, or omit some of them entirely (e.g., the *Purāṇas* are silent about the Kushans, Indo-Greeks Indo-Parthians, etc.). No dates are given, and even names of kings are not unoften inaccurate (cf. the list of Andhra kings). Notwithstanding these defects, the *Purāṇas* certainly transmit scraps of historical data, and it would not be fair to disparage their authority roundly. Among other early productions relevant

4 HISTORICAL (?) WORKS: FOREIGN WRITINGS

Harṣacarita, Sandhyākaranandi's Gupta's *Navasāhasāṅkacarita*, *Kadevacarita*, and Jayaratha's *Pratāp* happily, however, these works deal with historical matter, and are more or less full of elaboration, metaphor, and flourish in Sanskrit, which can be regarded as an approach to history, as we understand the *tarāṅgiṇī* of Kalhaṇa. It was begun in the 12th century, is based on writings of previous centuries, and on royal charters and laudatory inscriptions. The account of Kashmir for a few centuries preceding his time is quite reliable. In the period he too is unfortunately guilty of some lapses. In addition to these, we must consider the evidence of some southern Indian works (e.g., the *Nandikkalambam*, *Kulottuṅgan-Pillaittamil*, Jayagoṇḍā's *Rājarāja-śōlan-Ulā*, *Colavamśa-carita*, Chinese chronicles, the *Dīpavamśa* (fourth century) and the *Mabāvamśa* (sixth century), and such Prakrit compositions as Vāṣiṣṭha's *Hemacandra's Kumārāpālacarita*; and to be used with a cautious and critical use.

Foreign Writings

Not less valuable than the accounts of foreign writers or travellers, the knowledge of India was based either on those who stayed in the country for a short time or on those who belonged to men of several nationalities, Chinese, Tibetan, and Moslem.

and Roman works by Quintus Curtius, Diodoros Siculus, Arrian, Plutarch, and others; and the value of their testimony can best be judged from the fact that but for them we should have known nothing about the Macedonian invasion, so thoroughly have Indian writers maintained silence regarding this memorable episode. The *Indika* of Megasthenes, the Seleucid ambassador at the Maurya court, is another important source of information about the institutions, geography and products of India. It is now lost to us, but fragments are still preserved in the form of quotations by later authors, such as Arrian, Appian, Strabo, Justin, etc. Similarly, the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* and Ptolemy's *Geography* furnish geographical data of interest.

Like the classical (Greek and Roman) works, Chinese literature is also of great help in reconstructing ancient Indian history. There are numerous notices in it regarding the movements of the predatory Central Asian tribes that profoundly affected the destinies of India; and above all, we have the excellent narratives of Fa-hian (399-414 A. D.)¹, Yuan Chwang (629-45 A. D.)², and I-tsing (c. 673-95 A. D.)—three of the most distinguished pilgrims, who visited India in search of knowledge and with the desire to worship at the sites hallowed by the memory of the Buddha. Further, the works of the Tibetan Lāmā Tārānātha, the *Dulva* and *Tangyur*, etc. may also be profitably consulted.

Then come the Moslem authors, who inform us how step by step the armies of Islam conquered India and introduced another vigorous factor into Indian polity. The most celebrated of such writers was Alberuni, a man of versatile intellect and a scholar of

a mine of information on India. The earlier Moslem writers were Al Maʿūdī (*Silsilat-ut-Tawārikh*), and Al Maʿūdī. Among other Moslem works, we have Nizāmī's *Tāj-ul-Maāsir*, Mirkhond's *Shah-nāma*, Khond Mir's *Habīb-us-Siyar*, Firishta's *Tarīkh-i-Rajasthān*, Nizāmuddīn's *Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, Mir Nāsīrī's *Nasīrī*, Al Utbi's *Tarīkh-i-Yamīn*, and the *Tārīkh-ul-Kāmil*.

The observations and writings of these authors are particularly valuable not only for the light they throw on the political events, social conditions, geography, and religion of ancient India, but also in that they establish synchronisms in the chronology of the dates. Indeed, the identification of the reign of Chandragupta Maurya has been made possible in our hands as the sheet-anchor of Indian history.

Archæological sources

Inscriptions

Where the literary sources are scanty, the inscriptions fortunately come to the rescue. There are thousands of them, the earliest being of the fourth or fifth century B. C.¹ and the latest of perhaps a large number still awaiting discovery. They are found engraved on stone tablets, metal plates, caves, and other objects in the languages current at different times—Sanskrit, Pāli, mixed dialects, and others. In Southern India, *viz.*, Tamil, Telugu, and Kanarese. Some of them are of great historical merit too, being either in prose or in verse.

number are also incised in Kharoṣṭhī running, like Arabic and Persian, from right to left. Their decipherment, which is a marvel of scholarship, reveals that their object is to record a donation, public or private, or to commemorate a great event, or the exploits of a conqueror. The edicts of Aśoka, containing his ethical exhortations, are, of course, a class by themselves. The subject-matter of inscriptions is indeed very varied. There are even Sanskrit plays (e.g., at Dhār and Ajmer) and musical rules (e.g., at Kuḍimiyāmalai, Pudukotta State) recorded on stone. The importance of these documents can hardly be over-emphasised. They are extremely useful in fixing dates, and often regulate and supplement what we learn from literature and other sources. For instance, in the absence of such epigraphic evidence the veil of oblivion would hang heavily even on rulers like Khāvela or Samudragupta¹, and our knowledge of the mediæval Hindu dynasties would be altogether incomplete. Sometimes foreign inscriptions, too, unexpectedly lend us aid. Thus, the Boghaz-Koi (Asia Minor) inscriptions, which mention Vedic gods, probably testify to the movements of Aryan tribes. We have elsewhere referred to the contact of India with ancient Iran, and curiously it is confirmed by inscriptions discovered at Persepolis and Naksh-i-Rustam². Similarly, inscriptions throw a flood of light on the political and cultural relations between India and the Far East in early times.

Coins

The next guides, we may appeal to, are coins.

derived from literature, it. They are of various or alloy, and contain legends with dates are doubtless work of Indian chronologists. anonymous ones yield fully consider their fabric our sole evidence with and Indo-Baktrian kinds completely ignored the Coins shed remarkable *ganas* (autonomous communities) and also on the religious monarchs (e.g., of Kanishka) accomplishments (e.g., of the metal undoubtedly conditions of the time, and helps us in fixing the latter must be applied discovery of Roman coins in means indicate an extensive political influence in India. lament of Pliny over the country in exchange for etc.

Monuments

Last, but not the least are not directly concerned

at Boro-Bodur and Prambanam (central Java), as also the remarkable ruins at Angkor Vāt and Angkor Thom (Kambuja), reveal the hand of Indians, and show that they had migrated to the Far East and spread their power and culture there.¹ Even for purposes of chronology, the evidence of monuments cannot be entirely despised, for experts have demonstrated how important conclusions follow a close study of the stratification of buildings. Further, it may not be out of place to add here that sculptures and paintings (e.g., at Ajantā) occasionally illumine our path where we might otherwise have walked with faltering steps.

Conclusion or Main Features

Such, in brief,² are the sources for the resuscitation of India's early past. The most striking feature, when compared with modern history, is the meagreness of our materials and the wide range over which they lie scattered. Accordingly, the historian must work like a miner with the pick and shovel of his perseverance and critical judgment to get at the gold of facts without the dross of courtly exaggerations and poetic embellishments. Quite often rocks intervene in the shape of conflicting claims, utter absence of dates, or prevalence of several eras at different periods and places,³

¹ See Dr. R. C. Majumdar, *Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East*, Vol. I, Champā; *Suvarṇadvīpa*; and publications of the Greater India Society; Dr. B. R. Chatterji, *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia* (Calcutta, 1928); *India and Java* (Calcutta, 1922); H. C.